

publish a coordinated, comprehensive strategy. I think that is very sound advice and I will be introducing a resolution shortly to that effect.

Another major area of concern is China's military modernization. The weapons China is investing in include cruise missiles, amphibious assault ships, submarines, long-range target acquisition systems, and advanced SU-30 and SU-31 fighter aircraft it has been purchasing from Russia.

I have always been very proud of GEN John Jumper, who had the courage back in 1998 to stand up publicly to say right now we have other countries that are producing better equipment than we have, such as our strike vehicles. The very best we have is the F-15 and F-16. The SU-30s, according to General Jumper, are in many ways superior to ones we make in this country. We have to correct that situation and we are going to with the advent of the FA-22 and joint strike fighters that will be coming on line, but in the meantime China is buying these vehicles. We have always known they have a nuclear capability, but what is more concerning now is they have developed a conventional capability that is equal to or greater than ours in many respects.

The commission believes that this force is being shaped to fit a Taiwan conflict scenario:

[China's] military advancements have resulted in a dramatic shift in the cross-Straits balance toward China, with serious implications for Taiwan, for the United States, and for cross-Straits relations.

The commission states that there are two ways we can prevent a military escalation over Taiwan. The first is to pressure the EU to maintain its arms embargo on China. This is a group of bipartisan experts saying this. Second, we should have harsher punishments for contractors who sell sensitive technology to China. We need a comprehensive annual report on who is selling what to China because, quite frankly, right now we simply don't know exactly how deep this problem goes.

Opting to ignore the situation with China is not a choice that we as representatives of the American people can afford to make. I urge this body to listen closely to the commission's conclusion:

We need to use our substantial leverage to develop an architecture that will help avoid conflict, attempt to build cooperative practices and institutions, and advance both countries' long-term interests. The United States has the leverage now and perhaps for the next decade, but this may not always be the case . . . If we falter in the use of our economic and political influence now to effect positive change in China, we will have squandered an historic opportunity . . . China will likely not initiate the decisive measures toward more meaningful economic and political reform without substantial, sustained, and increased pressure from the United States.

In the resolution I introduce, I will be asking you to stand behind the US-China Commission's recommendations.

These recommendations are listed in the Commission's 2004 Report to Congress. I have highlighted a few of these in my recent speeches, but there are many more. We need to send a message of urgency to the administration to adopt what our own commission recommends. This is not a partisan move. This is a real and legitimate need to respond to the facts before us. We have a clear picture of where the trends are heading—economically, militarily and in ideology—and the security of the United States demands our response.

In my last speech that will accompany the resolution I will be introducing, I will summarize all the recommendations from the commission. I hope it will be the first—but not final—step in the development of a more proactive and comprehensive policy toward China. It needs to be a policy that adequately addresses our national security, especially the proliferation of military technology. It also needs to address free trade, human rights and, of course, Taiwan. I fear the track we are on does not adequately address any of these.

This is very distressing. In some of the previous talks we quoted some of the Chinese colonels when they said we can do this to America, we can compete not only militarily but economically. This is something we have to be concerned about. I cannot think of anything that would be more important to address from a national security objective than that.

However, there is something that is most important to address right now and that is the subject we are on, which is the reauthorization of the highway bill.

I will make a couple of comments about that. I know there are some other people who want to come down. I will yield to them at that time. But when you look at the way the Senate has historically approached the reauthorization of the highway bill, it is different than has been done on the other side. It is the more difficult way because there are so many things that are in a formula. Formulas address problems in low-income States, in low-population States, in low-population density States, in States with high fatality rates, with guaranteed minimum growth and guaranteed minimum rate of return from donor States. We have done States. All of these things are part of a very complex formula.

We will tomorrow be talking about this for an hour, from 10:45 to 11:45. There will be 1 hour equally divided between both sides. I will be controlling the time on this side. I hope at that time we have Members come down who are concerned about this bill, who have problems with this bill, so we can respond to those problems but, most importantly, so we can have cloture on a motion to proceed and have a vote. That vote will take place at 11:45 tomorrow morning. I look forward to coming down and debating the merits of the highway bill.

The bill passed last year—and this is substantially the same as last year's bill—passed this body by a margin of 76 to 21. I anticipate the same thing will happen, but it will not happen until we get to the bill. We will not get on the bill until the cloture on the motion to proceed is voted on, which will be at 11:45 tomorrow morning.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SILVER STAR IN ILLINOIS ARMY RESERVE UNIT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about two Army Reserve soldiers from Illinois I had the pleasure of meeting recently: SPC Jeremy Church and LT Matthew Brown.

Both of these soldiers fought last year in a battle that remains the largest enemy ambush of American troops in the war in Iraq. The battle occurred on Good Friday last year, April 9, 2004.

The 724th Transportation Company of Bartonville, IL, was taking part in a convoy escort operation delivering fuel to Baghdad International Airport when it was ambushed by insurgents. More than 150 enemy fighters poured heavy weapons fire onto the convoy.

Lieutenant Brown was the convoy commander. Specialist Church was his driver. In the first minutes of the attack, Lieutenant Brown was wounded, losing his eye. Specialist Church remained calm, simultaneously treating his wounded lieutenant, driving his damaged vehicle, and firing his rifle, one-handed, at the enemy.

Specialist Church drove to safety, dropped off the wounded Lieutenant Brown, rallied some assistance, and then drove back into danger, the kill zone, to help rescue, extract, his buddies who were still trapped under fire. He loaded casualties onto a truck until it was full, then sent the wounded soldiers to safety while he remained behind to continue the fight, taking cover behind destroyed vehicles.

For his actions that day, Specialist Church was awarded the Silver Star, the third-highest honor the United States can offer for valor in combat. He is the first and only U.S. Army Reserve soldier to win this medal in this conflict. Lieutenant Brown was awarded the Bronze Star.